A SERMON

Preached

November V.

1673.

AT

St. MARGARETS Westminst.

By EDWARD STILLINGFLEET, D.D.
Chaplain in Ordinary to His
MAJESTY.

The Second Edition.

LONDON,

Printed, by *Robert White*, for *Henry Mortlock*, and are to be sold at the White Hart in *Westminster* Hall, and at the Phenix in St. *Pauls* Church-yard, 1674.

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St MATTH. VII. 15, 16.

Beware of false Prophets, which come to you in Sheeps clothing, but inwardly they are ravening Wolves. Ye shall know them by their Fruits.

IF we were to judge of the *nature* of *Christianity* by the designs and practices of some, who would be thought the only *true* and *Catholick Christians*, we should have no great reason to esteem it our honour to be called by his Name, who first brought this Religion into the world. For if the *Christian Religion* did indeed justifie all the *fraud* and *treachery*, the *mischief* and *cruelty* which hath been either acted or designed by men under the glorious pretence of advancing the interest of the *Catholick Church*, we might better choose not to be *Christians*, than to be such *men*. Because whatever Religion overthrows the com-

mon principles and duties of humane nature, ſuch as thoſe of *Civil obedience*, *integrity* and *humanity* are, cannot be ſuppoſed a Religion proper or intended by God for mankind; whoſe great end in Religion is to improve and rectifie, and not to debauch or corrupt the diſpoſitions of men. Men need no Religion to inſtruct them in the arts of deceiving, the contrivances of malice, or the methods of revenge; ſuch *fruits* as theſe ſpring up too eaſily in our corrupt and degenerate natures, which need no great force or improvement to bring them forth: But when the warmth of the Sun ſhall be joyned with the fruitfulneſs of the ſoil, when men are encouraged to purſue their own natural inclinations by the moſt powerful motives of Religion, what bounds can be ſet to the growth and increaſe of theſe accurſed fruits? Of all Religions in the world, we might have thought the Chriſtian leaſt lyable to be abuſed to ſuch ill purpoſes; for it was one of *Machiavel's* quarrels againſt Chriſtianity, that by its precepts of meekneſs and patience, it rendred men unfit for ſuch great undertakings, which could not be accompliſhed without ſomething of cruelty and inhumanity, whereas the old Religions by the multitude of Sacrifices did inure men to blood and deſtruction, and ſo made them fitter for any enterpriſe. And *Machiavel* was certainly in the right, if Religion

ligion were intended only to make men *Butchers*: or to inſtruct them in the Uſe of Swords and Gunpowder. Nay, the Religion of *Mahomet* is in this reſpect to be very much preferred before the Chriſtian, for that makes it not only lawful to deſtroy thoſe of a different Religion, but enrolls them for Martyrs that dye in the Field, and makes the blood of enemies as meritorious, as we do that of the Croſs. But that is reſerved as the peculiar honour of the Chriſtian Religion, that it commands the ſubduing all the bruitiſh and ſavage inclinations of men to acts of revenge and cruelty; that it reſtores humane nature to it ſelf by its precepts of meekneſs, mercy, peaceableneſs, and univerſal charity; that it advances it to a divine nature by the imitation of God himſelf, in ſhewing kindneſs to enemies, and overcoming evil with good. This is the Religion eſtabliſhed by our Lord and Saviour in this excellent Sermon on the Mount, wherein the ſcope and deſign of Chriſtianity is delivered with the greateſt plainneſs and perſpicuity; which (if it be poſſible for us to judge of his meaning by the cleareſt expreſſions) was far enough from being the ſetting up a Monarchy in the Church to which all the Kings of the Chriſtian world are by their Baptiſm bound to vail their Crowns, and lay their Scepters at its feet: or in caſe they do not, that then this Spiritual

Monarch may excommunicate, depoſe, and deprive Princes of their Government, and diſſolve all the obligations between their Subjects and them; and make it lawful for them to depoſe them: We find not the leaſt footſtep of any thing tending this way, where our Saviour ſpeaks moſt advantageouſly concerning the honour of his Diſciples; which honour he repreſents by things which ſet forth their uſefulneſs in common: *Ye are the Salt of the Earth, ye are the light of the World*; and not by ſetting up one above all the reſt, *far above all Principalities and Powers*, to whom Kings and Princes, and all People are bound to be ſubject, if they regard their ſalvation. If any ſuch thing as this had been ſo material a part of the Chriſtian Doctrine, as ſome imagine, if it had been ſo neceſſary to ſalvation, it is ſomewhat ſtrange, that when our Bleſſed Saviour gave ſo many directions in order to ſalvation, he ſhould give not ſo much as the leaſt intimation concerning this. And yet he ſaith, at the end of this Sermon, *Every one that heareth theſe ſayings of mine, and doth them, is like unto a wiſe man that built his houſe upon a rock*; not *ſuper hanc Petram*, i. e. according to the *Roman Gloſs*, upon the Popes Authority; but upon ſuch a firm foundation as will never fail him. And what is it which our Saviour endeavours to perſwade men to, in order to ſo firm a ſettlement of their minds againſt all the aſſaults

Matth. 5. 13, 14.

Mat. 7. 24.

of

of perſecutions? *viz.* to humility, meekneſs, goodneſs, univerſal holineſs, to the love of God and mankind, to ſincerity in devotion, dependence on Providence, prayer, and doing as we would be done by: this is the ſubſtance of the Chriſtian Law delivered by the Son of God; than which nothing can be imagined more contrary to the Spirit of Faction and diſobedience, of cruelty and revenge, and that covered over with a pretence of zeal for Religion. But he who gave theſe excellent precepts, did foreſee, that there would ariſe *men who ſhould preach and propheſie in his Name, and in his Name caſt out Devils, and do wonderful works*: that yet for all their fair ſhews and pretences to the world ſhould be of a temper and diſpoſition directly contrary to the Goſpel; and therefore it was neceſſary for all Chriſtians, as they valued their own welfare, to have an eye to them, leſt they ſhould be deceived by them: which is the meaning of our Saviour in theſe words; *Beware of falſe Prophets which come to you in Sheeps clothing, but inwardly they are ravening Wolves; by their fruits ye ſhall know them.* Wherein we have theſe two things conſiderable.

1. The Caution given, *Beware of falſe Prophets*, together with the ground of that Caution, *For they come to you in Sheeps clothing, but inwardly are ravening Wolves.*

2. The Rule laid down whereby we are

to

to judge of them: *By their fruits ye ſhall know them.*

1. The Caution given, *Beware of falſe Prophets.* There were two ſorts of deceivers our Saviour gives his Diſciples particular caution
Mat. 24. 24. againſt, viz. *falſe Chriſts and falſe Prophets*; the *falſe Chriſts* were thoſe who pretended that they were the perſons who were foretold by the Prophets that ſhould come for the redemption of his Peo-
Mat. 24. 5. ple; *for many ſhall come in my Name, ſaying, I am Chriſt, and ſhall deceive many.* Not as though they pretended to be ſent by Chriſt, but that they would aſſume to themſelves the Dignity and Authority of the true Meſſias; and of this ſort, there were many that aroſe among the Jews, ſuch as *Theudas, Jonathas, Barchochebas*, and many others. But beſides theſe, there were *falſe Prophets*, ſome of which did openly oppoſe Chriſtianity, ſuch as
Acts 13. 6. that *Bar-Jeſus* mentioned in the *Acts*; but there were others who pretended to own Chriſtianity,
Mat. 7. 21. and to propheſie in the Name of Chriſt, whom
2 Pet. 2. 1. S. *Peter* calls *falſe Teachers*; and whom S. *Paul* deſcribes by the ſame character that our Saviour here doth: *But I know that after my departing ſhall*
Act. 20. 29, 30. *grievous Wolves enter in among you, not ſparing the flock: alſo of your own ſelves ſhall men ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe things, to draw diſciples after them*: whom
Rom. 16. 18. he elſewhere ſets forth by their Sheeps clothing; when he ſaith, that *by good words and fair ſpeeches they deceive*

deceive the hearts of the ſimple, whom he calls *falſe Apoſtles, deceitful workers transforming themſelves into the Apoſtles of Chriſt*: which carryed ſo fair a ſhew and appearance among the people, that S. *Paul* was very full of jealouſie and apprehenſion concerning them, leſt they ſhould by degrees draw away his Diſciples from the ſimplicity of the Goſpel of Chriſt. *For I am jealous over you*, ſaith he, *with godly jealouſie; but I fear leſt by any means as the Serpent beguiled* Eve *through his ſubtilty, ſo your minds ſhould be corrupted from the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt.* It may ſeem ſtrange, that after the Apoſtles had with ſo much care and diligence planted the Goſpel of Chriſt in ſeveral Churches, they ſhould expreſs ſo much fear as they did, (and eſpecially S. *Paul*) of their being ſo ſoon corrupted by theſe falſe Teachers; as he doth, not only of the *Corinthians*, but of the *Galatians* too. *I marvel*, ſaith he, *that ye are ſo ſoon removed from him that called you into the grace of Chriſt.* And *O fooliſh* Galatians, *who hath bewitched you, that you ſhould not obey the truth?* and of the *Epheſians*, *That we henceforth be no more Children toſſed to and fro, and carryed about with every wind of doctrine, by the ſleight of men, and cunning craftineſs, whereby they lye in wait to deceive*: and of the *Coloſſians*, *Beware leſt any man ſpoil you through Philoſophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Chriſt.* And *Let no man beguile*

2 Cor. 11. 13.

V. 2, 3.

Gal. 1. 6.

3. 1.

Eph. 4. 14.

Coloſſ. 2. 8.

18.

you

you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worſhipping of Angels: and of the Hebrews, Be not carried about with diverſe and ſtrange doctrines. But we ſhall ſee this great Caution, delivered here firſt by our Saviour, and afterwards by his Apoſtles, was no more than neceſſary, if we conſider under what pretences they came, and what Arts and Methods theſe falſe Teachers uſed to delude and ſeduce the people.

Heb. 13. 9.

1. They pretended to the ſame infallible Spirit which the Apoſtles had. And this may be the reaſon, why our Saviour doth not here call them *falſe Teachers*, but *falſe Prophets*. For Prophecy in its proper notion doth not relate to future events, but to divine Inſpiration. So S. *Chryſoſtom* ſaith προφήτης is the ſame with ἑρμηνεύτης, *a Prophet*, ſaith he, *is the ſame with Gods interpreter*: ſo the word προφητεύειν is uſed in Greek Authors, as in the Author of the Book *de Mundo*, προφητεύειν is rendered by *Apuleius effari cæteris*; and *Feſtus* ſaith, that the *Latines* called thoſe Prophets, which were *oraculorum interpretes*; and ſo the Hebrew words are taken in the ſame ſenſe without any relation to foretelling things to come. So *Moſes* is ſaid *to be a God to* Pharaoh, *and* Aaron *thy Brother ſhall be thy Prophet*: *i. e.* thy interpreter. *Abraham is called a Prophet*, and the *Patriarchs* are all called *Prophets*, in regard that Divine Revelations were more common before the written Law: but

S. Chryſ. in 1. *ad Cor. hom.* 36.

Auct. de Mundo, c. 1.

Plut. de def. Orac.

Lucian. in Vit. Phil.

Exod. 7. 1.

Gen. 20. 7.

Pſalm 105. 15.

but the reaſon why the name of Prophecy came to be reſtrained to the prediction of things to come, was becauſe future events lying moſt out of the reach of mens knowledge, the fore-telling of theſe was looked upon as the greateſt evidence of divine inſpiration. But in the New Teſtament propheſying is often taken for the gift of interpreting the hard places of the Old Teſtament, as *Themiſtius* calls one that interpreted the hard places in *Ariſtotle*, Ἑρμηνέα Ἀριστοτέλους, *Themiſt. Or.* 1. thence Propheſying is reckoned among the ſpiritual gifts; and ſo theſe *falſe Prophets* were 1 Cor. 12. 10. not men who pretended to fore-tell future events, but to the aſſiſtance of an infallible Spirit, in giving the ſenſe of Scripture; and by this pretence they transformed themſelves into the *Apoſtles* of Chriſt, giving out that they enjoyed equal priviledges with them: whereby three things may be obſerved which deſerve our conſideration.

1. That nothing is more eaſie, than for falſe Teachers to pretend to an infallible Spirit; ſuch whom our Saviour and his Apoſtles did warn men eſpecially againſt, pretended to be *Prophets* and *Apoſtles*, and to know the mind of Chriſt better than they who truly had the aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghoſt. Some think *the bare pretence to Infallibility ought in ſuch a divided ſtate of the Chriſtian world to be entertained as the beſt*

expedient to end Controverſies, and that Church which doth alone challenge it, ought on that account to be ſubmitted to; as though the moſt confident pretenders were to be ſooneſt believed: ſo they will be, do what we can, by the weakeſt ſort of mankind, but by none who have and uſe their judgements. If bare pretences were ſufficient, *Simon Magus* did bid the faireſt to be *Head* of the *Church*, for he pretended to be *Gods Vicar upon earth*, or *the divine Power ſent down from Heaven*, which none of the Apoſtles pretended to. Why then did not the Chriſtian Church ſubmit to *Montanus* his *Paraclete*, when no other Chriſtians pretended to ſuch an immediate inſpiration as he did? And certainly *Priſca* and *Maximilla* were better Oracles, than a *Crucifix* was to a late *Pope*. If there be any thing beyond a bare pretence to an infallible Spirit, we deſire to ſee better arguments for it, than the *falſe Apoſtles* could produce for theirs; if there be nothing but a bare pretence, we muſt leave the *Pope* and *Quakers* to diſpute it out.

Epiph. hær. 20.

2. That the pretence to Divine Inſpiration is very dangerous to the Chriſtian Church. For we ſee what miſchief it did in the Apoſtolical times, when there was a true infallible Spirit in the Apoſtles of Chriſt to diſcover and confute it; yet notwithſtanding all the care and diligence of the Apoſtles many were ſeduced by it. For thoſe who

who have the leaſt ground, do commonly uſe the greateſt confidence, and denounce *Hell* and *damnation* the ſooneſt to thoſe who deſpiſe and reject them. Which being expreſſed with a grim countenance and a terrible accent, ſtartles and ſhakes more perſons of weak judgements and timorous diſpoſitions, than all the reaſons and arguments they could ever produce. This hath alwayes been the method of deceivers, to pretend to the higheſt, and then make the ſin of thoſe who do not believe them as great, as if the thing were real. Thus the rejecting mens Fanatick pretences to Revelations and Extaſies is cryed out upon, as blaſpheming the *Holy Ghoſt*; and refuſing to believe upon the *Roman* Churches pretended Infallibility, is called no leſs, than denying Gods Veracity. We profeſs to believe the true inſpiration of the *Holy Ghoſt*, and every tittle of what God hath revealed: but we will not ſwallow Pretences for Evidences, nor Enthuſiaſms for Revelations. For as the true Religion was at firſt founded upon Divine Inſpiration; ſo we know that the greateſt corruptions of it have ſprung from the pretence to it. *Maimonides* ſaith, that *the firſt beginning of Pagan Idolatry, was owing to the pretence of Inſpiration, and immediate Revelations for the Worſhip of the Stars.* However that be, we are certain the Devil made uſe of *Oracles* and *Enthuſiaſms*, as the moſt effectual

Maim. de Idol. c. 1. ſect. 3.

means to bring men to the practice of it, both in *Ægypt*, in *Greece* and many other places; and they who have taken the pains to collect them, have reckoned one hundred and sixty several Oracles that were in request in the times of Paganism. After Christianity began to be setled in the world, the greatest corrupters of it were the pretenders to Dinive Inspiration, as the false Apostles, the *Gnosticks*, the *Montanists*, and many others. And the pretence to this, is so much the more dangerous, because it bids high, and is easily taken up, and requires no learning or wit, but only confidence to manage it, and may carry men by impulses and motions to the most unwarrantable actions, and where it meets with an Enthusiastical temper, is very hardly removed.

3. We may observe, that a truly infallible Spirit is not sufficient to put an end to Controversies. For when was that ever more evident than in the holy Apostles after the miraculous descent of the Holy Ghost upon them? Many are apt to say now, *That there will never be an end of these wranglings, and Schisms, and disputes in Religion, till there be an infallible Judge to put an issue to them*; But were there not infallible Judges in the Apostles time, that gave infinitely greater evidence of an infallible Spirit, than any ever since have done? But were Controversies put to an

end

end by it? No certainly, when the Apoſtles complain ſo much of the Schiſms, and diviſions, and errors, and hereſies, and diſputes, and quarrellings that were among them. And if ſo great an evidence of a Divine Spirit manifeſted by their Miracles, had no greater effect then, what can we imagine the ſhadow of S. *Peter*, or the dream of infallibility can do in the *Roman* Church? And give me leave to ſay, it is the Inquiſition and not Infallibility, which keep things quiet among them. But God deliver us from ſuch an end of Controverſies.

2. The falſe Prophets and Apoſtles pretended to greater mortification and ſelf-denyal than the true Apoſtles did S *Hierom* underſtands their coming in *Sheeps clothing*, of this pretence *to greater ſeverity, and rigour of life* than others uſed. Thoſe that go about to deceive, muſt appear to have ſomething extraordinary this way, to raiſe an admiration of them among thoſe who judge of Saints more by their *looks*, than by their *actions*. Whereas the greateſt Hypocrites have been alwayes the greateſt pretenders this way. Our bleſſed Saviour was ſo far from making any ſhew of this rigour and ſeverity, that he was reproached by the Scribes and Phariſees, thoſe mortified Saints, *to be a wine-bibber, a friend to Publicans and Sinners*. Alas! what heavenly looks, and devout geſtures, and long prayers, and frequent *Hier. in loc.*

quent

quent faſtings had they more than Chriſt or his Diſciples? The poor Widows were ſo raviſhed with their long prayers, that they thought they could not do better with their houſes or eſtates, than to put them into the hands of ſuch mortified men to the world: till they found, notwithſtanding *their Sheeps clothing*, that by their *devouring they were ravening Wolves.* Thoſe that ſeem ſo much to fly from the world, do but as Souldiers in a Battel ſometimes do, that ſeem to fly from their enemies, but only with a deſign to make them follow, that they may have the more advantage upon them. One would think no men were ſo afraid of the world, as they that ſeem to run ſo faſt from it, but they lay their Ambuſcado's to entrap it; and if once it gets into their hand, no men know better how to be revenged upon it. What pleaſant incongruities are theſe? to ſee men grow rich by Vows of Poverty, retired from the world, and yet the moſt unquiet and buſie in it? Mortified to the pleaſures of life, and yet delighting moſt in following the Courts of Princes? Such kind of men were the *Phariſees* of old: and who would have thought, that under the Name of that *Jeſus*, who ſo much deteſted and abhorred their hypocriſie, there ſhould others ariſe, who have outdone them in their own way? As though Chriſt had ſaid, *Except your righteouſneſs be like the righteouſneſs of the*

Scribes

Scribes and Phariſees, ye ſhall not enter in the Kingdom of Heaven. But we need not wonder that in theſe latter ages ſuch pretences ſhould be made uſe of, ſince in the very beginning of the Chriſtian Church, theſe were the common arts of deceivers. They found fault with the Apoſtles, as giving too much liberty to men in the uſe of Marriage and Meats; but they thought the ſtate of the one was not agreeable to their ſanctity, nor the free uſe of the other conſiſtent with their ſevere and mortified life. *For they did forbid to marry, and commanded to abſtain from meats.* They would not make uſe of the liberty which God had allowed, but they were ready to take that which he had forbidden: therefore the Apoſtle gives the true character of them when he ſaith, *they ſpake lyes in hypocriſie.* There was an outward ſhew of ſanctity and ſeverity in their doctrine; but no men are obſerved by *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorians* to have been more eager of what God had forbidden, than they who were ſo ſcrupulous about what God had allowed. We do not ſay, the caſe is altogether the ſame, *where men are forbidden abſolutely, as though Marriage were unlawful in it ſelf*; which was the caſe of the antient Hereticks; and *where it is forbidden only to a particular Order of men*, as it is in the Church of *Rome*: but this we ſay, that where it is forbidden to *a particular Order of men*, as though it did not become the

1 Tim. 4. 3.

ſanctity of that *Order*; this is reviving that hypocriſie which S. *Paul* condemns: eſpecially when it is forbidden on ſuch an account as Pope *Siricius* did it, *becauſe they that are in the fleſh cannot pleaſe God*; which is in effect ſending all married perſons to Hell. This was one part of the pretended mortification of falſe Teachers about Marriage, the other was about Meats. S. *Paul* knew no ſuch holineſs in one ſort of Meat above another, as though men could faſt their bellies full of one, but the leaſt taſte of the other deſtroyed it. What a pleaſant thing it is to account that faſting, which the unmortified *Epicures* of old accounted their moſt delicious feaſting, *viz.* Fiſh and Wine! This is not doing ſo much as the Phariſees did, for they *appeared unto men to faſt*: but in the Church of *Rome* they cannot be ſaid to do that, unleſs faſting and eating be the ſame thing. *But may not the Church call not eating prohibited meat faſting?* No doubt it may; as well as call that no bread, which we ſee, and taſte, and handle to be bread. However I cannot underſtand, but if their Church had ſo pleaſed, the eating Fleſh and abſtaining from Fiſh might have been called faſting; and ſo they might have made one entire Faſt of a whole years eating: and notwithſtanding all the pretence of faſting and mortification in that Church, I cannot ſee that any man is bound by the Laws

Siric. Ep. 1. c. 7.
Ep. 4. c. 9.
Mat. 6. 17.

of

of it, to keep one *true fast* all the dayes of his life. But if all the mortification required, lyes only *in a distinction of meats*, the false *Apostles* went beyond them in it; for they utterly forbid some sorts, saying, *touch not, taste not, handle not*; and not Col. 2. 24.
meerly to shew their obedience to the commands of the Church, but that they might not gratifie the desires of the flesh, and therefore the Apostle saith, *these things* had on that account *a shew of* V. 23.
wisdom in them; being in all probability taken from the severe precepts of the *Pythagorean* Philosophy, which makes him bid them, *Beware lest they were* V. 8.
spoiled through Philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, and the principles of the world, and not after Christ. For if this sort of *mortification* were a thing so pleasing to God, the *Heathen* principles were more agreeable to his nature, than the doctrine of *Christianity*. This only requires the subduing our inward lusts, and in order to that, to keep the body in subjection; but in the mysteries of the *Heathen* Religion far greater severities were to be undergone, in order to their participation of them. And the hardships were so great in some of their initiations, especially those of *Mithras*, that some dyed before they could pass through them: and yet for any to be admitted without them, was present death to them. They were to make *confession of their sins, to shave their heads, change their habits, lye*

upon the bare ground, fast for several dayes, and when they eat, it was to be only of some certain meats; these and many other severities they were to go through in order to the purifying their souls, as they thought, and bringing them to the state they were in before they came into the body. Some part of these hardships the *Pythagoreans* took into their *Philosophy*; and from them the *Colossians* began to be infected with them: but S. *Paul* calls them only *vain deceits, the commandments and doctrines of men, things that made a fair shew*, but he looks upon them as corruptions of the doctrine of Christ. Yet afterwards the *Montanists* and *Encratites* and others were much stricter and more frequent in these fasts and abstinence, than the Catholick Christians; but the Church thought fit to condemn them, as corrupters of Christianity. By all which we see, how apt men are to be deceived by false Teachers, when they pretend to so much *Mortification* above what Christianity requires from them.

3. They pretended to know the mind of Christ better than the Apostles did: they pretended, that they had conversed familiarly with Christ upon earth, and understood his meaning better than the *Apostles* did. And therefore their
1 Cor. 1. 12. Disciples in the *Church* of *Corinth*, were neither for *Paul*, nor *Apollos*, nor *Cephas*, but they were only for *Christ*: and gave out that from him they understood,

derſtood, that what he had ſaid concerning the *Reſurrection*, was only to be underſtood of the *ſtate* of *Regeneration*: which doctrine it ſeems had gotten great footing in the *Church* of *Corinth* by their means. They reported, that the Apoſtles underſtood only ſome common and ordinary things, but the *deeper* and *more hidden myſteries* were only made known to them: which makes S. *Paul* in his *Epiſtles* to thoſe *Churches* which they had corrupted, ſpeak ſo often of his underſtanding *the myſteries of God*: *But we ſpeak the wiſdom of God* 1 Cor. 2. 7. *in a myſterie, even the hidden wiſdom which God ordained before the world to our glory: having made known* Eph. 1. 9. *unto us the myſterie of his will: whereby ye may underſtand my knowledge in the myſterie of Chriſt.* The true 3, 4. Apoſtles declared, *that they kept back nothing of the counſel of God*, but delivered it openly and plainly, *to make all men ſee and underſtand what that myſterie was*: V. 9. the falſe Apoſtles pretended, that the Doctrine and Writings of the Apoſtles did not contain all the *great myſteries* of the *Goſpel*, but they were received from Chriſts own mouth, and conveyed to others by a *ſecret* and *oral tradition*. The things written by the *Evangeliſts* they could not deny to be true, but they were dark and obſcure, and could not be underſtood but by the help of their *Oral Tradition*: and upon this principle, *Cerinthus*, *Baſilides*, *Valentinus*, and *Marcion* went, as appears by *Irenæus*. For when they ſaw, they could *Iren. l. 3. c. 2.*

never make good their Doctrines by the writings of the *New Testament* they sought to blast the reputation of these, and set up the Authority of an *Oral Tradition* above them. Men do not use to pick quarrels with their Friends; and therefore when we find any charging the Scripture with obscurity and imperfection, we have reason to believe, they hope for no comfort from it.

4. They made use of the most subtle and crafty methods of deceiving. To this end they were very busie and active, watching every opportunity; therefore S. *Paul* charges them with *sleight and cunning craftiness, lying in wait to deceive*: *i.e.* with using all the arts and tricks of deceivers: as (1.) By deep dissimulation and disguising themselves; not appearing at first to be what they really are; nor letting them understand, what their true doctrine and design is. If any of those they hope to gain, object any thing against them, how do they pity their ignorance, and revile their Teachers, that did so foully misrepresent their Doctrines to them! Alas for them poor men, they neither understand us nor our Religion! "They "have taken up things upon trust, & their preju- "dice will not suffer them to examine things as "they are. Have you not been told thus and thus "concerning us, and not one word of it is true? "Never trust such men more, come be perswaded "by us, and then you shall be truly enlightned.

Eph. 4.14.

(2.) By

(2.) By raiſing prejudices againſt their Teachers; as they did in the *Church* of *Corinth* againſt S. *Paul*, repreſenting him as a man *of a mean and contemptible preſence, and rude in ſpeech.* "Come, ſay they, and hear "our Preachers, with what admirable eloquence "and moving expreſſions they ſpeak, how they "dart beams of light into mens minds, and ſtrike "through the ſouls of men! you would never care "for this dull and obſcure way of S. *Paul* more. But this is a ſmall thing to diſparage only his gifts; "Obſerve ſay they his doctrine, and ſee whi-"ther it tends, is not he againſt thoſe that forbid "to marry, and abſtain from meats? Judge now "whither theſe looſe doctrines lead men. So S. *Paul* tell us, that they had repreſented him *as one that walked after the fleſh*; and had prevailed ſo far upon the people by theſe ſly inſinuations, as though all he aimed at, was only for his own advantage, *viz.* that he might be popular, and get himſelf an intereſt among that rich people of *Corinth*, ſo that he tells them, he was fain *to live upon other Churches to do them ſervice*: and he tells us afterwards *the falſe Apoſtles gave the occaſion of it*: & in the *Churches* of *Galatia* they had turned his greateſt friends to be his enemies; and he give this account of it, *they would exclude us, that you might affect them.* 2 Cor. 10. 1. 11. 6. 2 Cor. 10. 2. 2 Cor. 11. 8. 12. Gal. 4. 15, 16, 17.

(3.) By ſowing Schiſms & diviſions among them. This was their maſter-piece, to beget contentions where they could not prevail themſelves. What joy

joy was it to them to see in the Church of *Corinth*,
1 Cor. 1. 12 such parties and factions made among them? *some for* Paul, *some for* Apollos, *some for* Cephas; from
3. 3. hence proceeded *envying, and strife, and divisions among them*; and this gave them a fair opportunity of breaking them in pieces one against another. And therefore the Apostle saw it necessary to use the utmost means to cure these divisions among them; and elsewhere beseeches the Christians to
Rom. 16. 17, 18. *mark them that cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them; for they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple*: i.e. they carry on their own designs and interests, by these means; and therefore study all the ways to foment and increase them. "Why "should the disciples of *Peter* yield to those of *Paul*, "and why should not those of *Apollos* be regarded "as much as either? And such was the unhappy success of these mens arts in this divided Church of *Corinth*, that notwithstanding all the care of S. *Paul* to put an end to their factions, they brake out with greater fury afterwards, as appears by
Clem. Ep. p. 2. 19. the Epistle of *Clemens* to them: and he takes notice of those who did cast the arrows of contention among them: and therefore he makes that the chief argument of his Epistle, to defeat the design of the false Teachers, by perswading them to peace and unity among themselves. (4.) By the most

most plausible insinuations. *By good words and fair speeches*, saith S. *Paul, they deceive the hearts of the simple*: they might find by their softness and gentleness that they were in *Sheeps clothing*. How meek and humble, and insinuating are they where they have any hopes of a prey! how do the bowels of these *raveningWolves* yearn towards the *silly sheep*, that look only on their outsides! They would not hurt a limb of them for all the world! Nothing but meer zeal for their good, could make them run such hazards, and venture so much as they do! What end could they have in following such stray Sheep, but to reduce them to the true sheepfold? Thus, if the *Wolves* may be believed, there is no danger to the *Sheep*, but from their *Shepherds*: let them but forsake them, and then see what admirable love, and peace, and unity they would live together in: but the *Apostle* well adds to all this, *deceiving the hearts of the simple*, for none else are capable of being thus deceived, by all their fair pretences and plausible insinuations.

5. The false Teachers were for a more pompous and easie way of Religion, than the true Apostles were: These were for the *purity* and *simplicity* of the *Gospel* of Christ, the other were for joyning the *Jewish Ceremonies*, and the *Heathen Customs* together with it; and by this means they hoped with much more ease to gain *Proselytes* to them; especially when to this they added a greater

liberty in mens lives; ſo that by theſe offers, they hoped to gain the vain, the ſuperſtitious, and the profaner ſort wholly to them See how S. *Paul* deſcribes them, *having a form of godlineſs, but denying the power of it; for of this ſort are they which creep into houſes, and lead captive ſilly women laden with ſins, led away with divers luſts.* 2 Tim. 3. 4, 5. Theſe were ſubjects rightly diſpoſed to be deceived by them: their folly made them capable, and their luſts very tractable to ſuch a formal, pompous, eaſie Religion: It was by this indulgence of men in their ſins, that vile Sect of the *Gnoſticks* gained ſo much ground in the beginnings of Chriſtianity. S. *Chryſoſtom* thinks theſe words of our Saviour have a particular reſpect to the foregoing words, *Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* Mat. 7. 14. Now theſe words coming immediately after ſeem to imply, that theſe *falſe Prophets* were for making the gate wider, and the way to Heaven larger than Chriſt hath done, and ſuch need not fear they ſhall have many followers, and eſpecially of thoſe who are *fartheſt* from the Kingdom of Heaven. All the bleſſedneſs our Saviour promiſes, is to the humble and contrite, to the meek and righteous, to the merciful, pure and peaceable; but if others make eaſier conditions of bleſſedneſs, no wonder if their doctrine be entertained by thoſe who are willing to be happy, but unwilling to leave their ſins. As if falſe

Teachers

Teachers ſhould turn our Saviours Beatitudes into ſuch as theſe: *Bleſſed are ye, if ye confeſs your ſins to a Prieſt, and receive the Sacrament of Penance, for your ſins are forgiven. Bleſſed are ye, if ye vow poverty, and leave the world; for ye ſhall inherit the earth. Bleſſed are ye, if ye go in Pilgrimages, and viſit the ſeven Churches (eſpecially in a year of Jubilee, and receive the Popes benediction) for ye ſhall be called the Children of God. Bleſſed are ye, if ye do or ſuffer evil for the Catholick Churches ſake; for great ſhall be your reward in Heaven. Bleſſed are they, that howſoever they live, dye in S.* Francis *his habit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* For ſo *Gregory* the ninth ſaith, that S. *Francis obtained this priviledge of God, that whoſoever had that habit on, could not dye ill:* and S. *Francis* adds himſelf, *That whoſoever loved his Order in his heart, how great a ſinner ſoever he was, ſhould obtain mercy of God.* And are not theſe much eaſier terms of bleſſedneſs, than thoſe our Saviour layes down? Beſides, that which makes the way to Heaven more narrow, is that our Saviour declares, *he came not to deſtroy the Law, but to fulfill it*: and adds precepts of his own to it: But do not they make the way to Heaven much opener, that teach men to diſſolve both the Law and the Precepts of Chriſt? For this is the language of theſe falſe Teachers, if we bring their doctrine to the manner of our Saviours expreſſions. "Ye "have heard, that it hath been ſaid of old, *Thou "ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou* "*ſerve*;

Sacrar. Privileg. S. Francis. p. 6.

" ſerve; but we ſay unto you, that ye are to give
" worſhip both to Saints and Angels. Ye have
" heard, that it hath been ſaid by them of old
" time; *Thou ſhalt not make to thy ſelf any graven Image,*
" *nor the likeneſs of any thing*, &c. but we ſay unto
" you, that this Command may be left out among
" Chriſtians. You have heard that it hath been
" ſaid of old, *Thou ſhalt not kill*: but we ſay unto
" you, that to murder Princes, blow up Par-
" liaments, deſtroy Hereticks is lawful for the
" good of the Catholick Church. You have heard,
" that it hath been ſaid of old, *Thou ſhalt not commit*
" *adultery*: but we ſay unto you, that marriage in
" a Prieſt is worſe than fornication. Thus far for
the *Law*; now let us ſee the liberty they take as
to the precepts of the *Goſpel*. " Ye have heard that
" it hath been ſaid by Chriſt, *Drink ye all of this*:
" but we ſay unto you, that notwithſtanding this
" precept of Chriſt, the Laity muſt not do it. You
" have heard, that it hath been ſaid by the Apo-
" ſtle, that men ought to *pray with underſtanding*: but
" we ſay unto you, that men need not underſtand
" what they pray for. Ye have heard that ye have
" been commanded both by Chriſt and his Apo-
" ſtles, to *Read the Scriptures*: but we forbid the
" people to read the Scriptures, and ſay, that
" more hurt than good comes by it. Judge now,
whether the character of *falſe Teachers* do not be-
long to them, who have found another way, nay, a

contrary

contrary way to Heaven, to that which our Saviour directed? And so much for the Caution here given, and the Reason annexed to it; *Beware of false Prophets, for they come to you in Sheeps clothing, but inwardly they are ravening Wolves.* I come now,

2. To the Rule laid down by our Saviour for the judging of them; *By their fruits ye shall know them.* He doth not send men to an infallible Judge to know the *true* and *false Teachers* from each other, but layes down such a *Rule* as he supposed might be sufficient to direct men in their judgement of them. If *Christ* had ever intended to have left such a *Vicar upon Earth*, whose judgement all Christians are bound to follow, he would never have put them to such a needless tryal of mens Doctrines by their Fruits: the short and plain way had been to have said thus, *There will false Teachers arise, but remember that you are to obey and follow the Bishop of* Rome; *and if you will be saved, I command you to hold in communion with him.* This had been the fullest and clearest direction in the world, and no doubt, if our *blessed Saviour* had meant any such thing, such was his care of the souls of men, this would have been one of the first and plainest precepts of the Gospel. But so dark and obscure, so remote and impertinent are the proofs brought from *Scripture* for the *Popes Supremacy*, that I dare say, that *Aristotles Politicks* do prove it much better than any Text in the Bible: and those I suppose

have been of my opinion, who ſlightly paſſing over the paſſages of *Scripture*, have been large in proving, that *Monarchy is the beſt Government*, and therefore ought to be in the Church. Which argument if it have any force for an *Univerſal Monarchy* in the Church, I ſhould not at all wonder to ſee the ſame perſons zealous to promote an *Univerſal Monarchy* in the World too. For if the argument in the *Canon Law* be good, That the Pope is above the Emperour, becauſe God created two great Lights, *the Sun* and *the Moon*: I hope the ſame reaſon, which will prove it neceſſary for the *Sun to rule the day*, will equally hold, that *the Moon ſhould rule the night*. And I ſhall eaſily agree, that when it will be thought reaſonable for all the Kings and Princes in the world to ſubmit themſelves to one *Univerſal Monarch*, it may be then expedient for all particular Churches, to give up their rights to the Pope. In the mean time we think it moſt convenient to follow our Saviours Rules, to judge of mens pretences, how great and haughty ſoever, by the *fruits* they produce. Which *Rule* is not to be underſtood concerning the *particular actions of men* which have no reſpect to their *doctrines*; for as S. *Chryſoſtom* obſerves, many Hereticks have been men of excellent lives, and ſo on the contrary; but we are to underſtand it of thoſe *fruits* which their doctrines have a direct influence upon. And therefore this Rule

Gregor. de Majorit. & Obed.

hath a particular reſpect to two things by which we are to examine the faireſt pretences: *viz.* 1. The *deſign* they tend to. 2. The *means* made uſe of for the accompliſhing this deſign. If therefore the *deſign* be quite of another nature from that of the *Goſpel*; if the *means* be ſuch as are directly contrary to it, we may from thence juſtly inferr, that how plauſible ſoever the pretences are, how fine and ſoft ſoever *the Sheeps clothing* be, yet inwardly *they are ravening Wolves.*

1. I begin therefore, with the *deſign* of their doctrines. Nothing is more eaſie, than for men to underſtand the deſign of Chriſtianity, *viz.* the exerciſe of all Chriſtian vertues to fit men for the Kingdom of Heaven: for our Saviour declares, *That his Kingdom is not of this world*; that he came Joh. 18. 36. not to meddle with the rights of Princes, or to diſpoſe of Crowns and Dominions; all that he aimed at, was to poſſeſs men with a firm belief of another world, and by the moſt powerful motives to perſwade men to repentance, and a ſober, righteous, and a godly life. And if they did theſe things, what ever troubles and difficulties they met with in this world, ſhould be abundantly recompenſed in that to come. This is the main ſcope and deſign of the Chriſtian Religion; and the great art of the *falſe Prophets* lay in this, that they pretended ſtill to own Chriſtianity, (which was their *Sheeps clothing*) but withal

by

by ſecret and pernicious mixtures of their own doctrines to undermine and pervert the whole deſign of it. So S. *Paul* ſaith of them, not that they did oppoſe, but that they did *pervert the Goſpel of Chriſt*. *I marvel*, ſaith he, *that ye are ſo ſoon removed from him that called you into the grace of Chriſt to another Goſpel: which yet is not another, but there be ſome that trouble you, and would pervert the Goſpel of Chriſt.* Now I deſire, it may be conſidered, whether any thing doth more effectually pervert the deſign of the Goſpel, than the ſetting up a Kingdom in this world under the pretence of it, that ſhould be paramount to all Princes and Potentates, and to which they owe ſubjection and obedience? And yet this hath been the open and avowed deſign of the prevailing Faction in the *Church* of *Rome* for the laſt ſix hundred years. I do not deny but there were ſome tendencies to it before, and wiſe men might eaſily gueſs what it would come to, if the deſign came once to be managed by a man of Spirit and courage, as it was by *Gregory* the Seventh, who in a Council at *Rome* publiſhed his famous Dictates, viz. *That there is but one Name in the World*, viz. *that of the Pope*: *that it was in his power to depoſe Emperours, and abſolve Subjects from obedience to their Princes.* Now the grand deſign breaking out, all other things were contrived and carried on which were thought neceſſary to accompliſh it: and there being two things needful for the main-

Gal. 16. 7.

Baron. An. 1076. *Sect.* 31.

tenance

tenance of such a pretended Monarchy, *viz. sufficient numbers* of men, whose interest should lye in upholding it; and great revenues to support the dignity of it: These two were taken care of with all the art and industry imaginable. For the first, it was necessary to disengage them from all Civil interests, and yet to preserve their honour and reputation with the people. The former could not be done while the Clergy gave hostages of their fidelity to the Civil Government by the interest of their Families and Children, therefore this Pope did most severely forbid all Clergy mens marrying; that as the old *Roman* Souldiers were forbidden marriage while they received pay, lest their domestick interests should abate their courage; so the *Celibate* of the Clergy was strictly enjoyned, to make them more useful and hearty for this design. But lest the number of these should not be thought sufficient, great swarms of *Monks* and *Friers* were encouraged and dispersed in all Countreys, and to make them more faithful to this interest (becaus Princes might oblige particular Bishops who might curb and restrain these spiritual *Janizaries*) therefore they were exempt from their jurisdiction, and kept in immediate dependence on the Pope. To give yet further encouragement to both Orders, the Doctrine of *Ecclesiastical Liberty* was set on foot; not a liberty from the *Law of Moses*, or the *power of*

Sin, or the *dominion of Satan*, which is all the *Liberty* the *Goſpel* ſpeaks of; but an exemption from the power of the Civil Magiſtrate; in ſo much, that the Popiſh *Caſuiſts* determine, that *Rebellion in a Clergy-man is no Treaſon, becauſe he is not ſubject to the Civil power.* And this doctrine of Liberty is no invention of the *Jeſuits*; but it is determined by the famous *Councils* of *Conſtance*, *Lateran*, and *Trent*, *that Lay perſons have no Juriſdiction over Eccleſiaſtical.* But beſides this, the Pope hath other tyes upon them; every Biſhop is at this day ſworn *to obey the Pope* at his Conſecration; all the Regular Clergy are under a *Vow* of *blind obedience* to their *Superiours*, who are more immediately influenced by the *Court* of *Rome*. Now ſuch an infinite number of perſons being made thus ſure to the *Papal Intereſt*, it muſt be ſo ordered, that theſe perſons may preſerve their reputation among the people; to this end, they are told, that they muſt depend wholly upon the Prieſthood for matters of faith and ſalvation; and it is of mighty concernment to them to have the good will of the Prieſts, for that upon their good or bad intention depends the making or marring of their Sacraments. But that no deſigns might be carried on, which they ſhould not underſtand, never was there ſuch an invention to that purpoſe, as *Auricular Confeſſion*: and yet that the people may have greater reverence to their Prieſts, they are told, that they can make their

Sa Aphor. V. Clericus. Ed. Colon.

Conc. Conſt. Seſſ. 19. Concil. Lat. 5. Seſſ. 10. Conc. Trid. Seſſ. 25. c. 20.

V. Pontific. Rom. in Conſecr. Ep.

their God at any time by pronouncing the Five Words of Conſecration. And what cannot they do, (as one of them bravely ſaid) while they have their God in their hands, and their Prince on his knees? And both theſe doctrines of *Confeſſion* and *Tranſubſtantiation* were defined by the ſame Pope *Innocent* the third, a man of the ſame ſpirit and undertakings with *Gregory* the ſeventh. And laſtly, that no ſupplies ſhould be wanting to ſupport the Grandeur of the *Papal See*, beſides the pretended Donations and Conceſſions of Princes, all arts imaginable were uſed to drain money out of all Countreys in ſubjection to the Pope, and to empty *it into* the Popes Treaſury. This very Kingdom of ours was a remarkable inſtance of this, during its Vaſſallage under the Popes Tyranny. For an account being taken in *Henry* the Eighths time, it was found, that in the compaſs of forty years foregoing, no leſs a ſum than 160000 *l.* was carried to *Rome* upon the ſole account of Inveſtiture of Biſhops, beſides the vaſt ſumms that were raiſed by *Peter-pence*, *Diſpenſations* and *Indulgences*, which were a kind of Contribution upon the ſins of the People. Thus we ſee, how the deſign was laid and managed for an *Univerſal Monarchy* in the Church. But ſome will ſay, *that the world is grown wiſer now.* I heartily wiſh it were ſo; for nothing would be more prejudicial to the *Papal Intereſt*, than its being ſo. But let us not *Antiq. Brit. A.D.* 1532.

deceive our ſelves, the pretenſions are as high and as great at *Rome* to this *Monarchy* as ever they were. And what ever ſome vainly diſtinguiſh *of the Court and Church of Rome* in this matter, it is certain thoſe of the *Court of Rome* not only aſſert, but prove it too, that this doctrine hath been the doctrine of the *Roman Church* for ſix hundred years; and they produce for it beſides a great number of Authors no fewer than ten *Councils*, whereof two are allowed by them to be *general*, *viz.* thoſe of *Lyons* and *Lateran*. But this is not all, but they contend for it not as a probable opinion, but as a thing certain and of faith, and that not barely at *Rome*, but even in *France*. For in the memory of many yet alive, after a hot debate in a general Aſſembly of the three Eſtates at *Paris*, the *Popes Power of depoſing Princes* was aſſented to by all the *Nobility* and *Clergy* of that *Kingdom*. Some particular perſons among them, may and do oppoſe it of late; but they are *excommunicated at Rome* for doing it, and thereby declared as much as they can be, not to be *members of their Church*, for daring to oppoſe ſo Orthodox and Catholick a Doctrine as the Popes power of depoſing Princes. Nay, Cardinal *Perron* ſaith in his eloquent Oration to the third Eſtate at *Paris*, who oppoſed this Doctrine, *That unleſs it were approved, it followed that the Church of* Rome *for many Ages hath been the Kingdom of Antichriſt, and Synagogue of Satan:*

A.D. 1615.

Harangue faite de la part de la Chambre Eccleſiaſtique en celle du tiers Eſtat. ſur. l'article du Serment. Par Monſig. l'Eminentiſſ. Cardinal du Perron L'An. 1615.

and

and King *James* tells us, *That the Pope in his Letter of thanks to the Nobility, for complying with this bleſſed Doctrine*, called the *Commons* or *Deputies of the third Eſtate*, Nebulones ex fæce plebis, *a pack of Knaves of the very dregs of the People.* Very obliging language from the *Head of the Church*! When all that the *Commons* deſired, was only to have this Opinion condemned, *That the Pope hath power to depoſe Princes, and that killing of Kings is an act Meritorious to the purchaſe of the Crown of Martyrdom*: but this by all their inſtances and arguments, they could never obtain; but the Nobility and Clergy overruled them in it. For the *Clergy* King *James* ſaith, *He did not wonder ſo much, becauſe they look on themſelves as properly Subjects to the Pope, and therefore are bound to advance that Monarchy to which they belong. But for the Nobility*, ſaith he, *the Kings right arm, to proſtitute, and ſet as it were to ſale, the Dignity of their King, as if the arm ſhould give a thruſt unto the head; I ſay, for the Nobility to hold and maintain even in Parliament their King is lyable to depoſition by any forreign Power or Potentate, may it not paſs for one of the ſtrangeſt Miracles, and rareſt Wonders of the World? For that once granted, this conſequence is good and neceſſary; that in caſe the King once lawfully depoſed, ſhall ſtand upon the defenſive, and hold out for his right, he may then be lawfully murthered.* Which conſequence is very well underſtood at *Rome*, and allowed to be good by the *Roman Caſuiſts*; and yet the eloquent *Cardinal*

K. *James* Defence of the Right of Kings, in the Preface.

dinal calls that Doctrine which makes Princes indepoſable by the Pope, *A breeder of Schiſms, a gate that makes way for all Hereſie to enter; and a Doctrine to be held in ſuch deteſtation, that rather than he and his fellow Biſhops will yield to the ſigning thereof, they will be contented like Martyrs to burn at a ſtake.* Bleſſed Martyrs the mean while! and fit to be put in the ſame *Calendar* with the *Gunpowder Traitors*, who ſuffered, as I ſhall ſhew preſently, on the ſame principle; methinks they might have choſen a better Cauſe to have dyed Martyrs for. But ſurely it muſt be *an Article of faith*, and a main point of their Religion, which makes men *Martyrs* who ſuffer for it. And ſuch no doubt, it is accounted among them; when the ſame Cardinal ſaith, *That it leads men not only to unavoidable Schiſm, but manifeſt Hereſie to deny it; and that it obliges men to confeſs, that the Catholick Church hath for many ages periſhed from the earth*; for he confidently avows it, *that all parties in the Catholick Church have held it, and the whole* French *Church till the time of* Calvin; *that if this Doctrine be not true, the Pope is ſo far from being Head of the Church and Vicar of Chriſt, that he is a Heretick and Antichriſt, and all the parts of their Church are the Limbs of Antichriſt.* And if they be ſo, we cannot help it: but think we have great reaſon to ſecure our ſelves againſt the infection of ſuch pernicious principles both to Chriſtianity and the Civil Government. And

what

what can be more oppoſite to the deſign of Chriſtianity, when that requires men to obey even *Infidel* and *Heathen* Governours *for conſcience ſake*, Rom. 13. 5. this Doctrine makes it lawful to depoſe, deſtroy, and murder Chriſtian Princes for the Pope and the Churches ſake? This is the firſt thing we are to examine *falſe Teachers* by; *viz.* the *deſign* of their Doctrines.

2. By the *means* made uſe of to accompliſh this deſign: If things in themſelves evil, repugnant to the principles of humane nature, and thoſe of civil ſocieties, as well as to the precepts of Chriſtianity, are made lawful only for the carrying on their deſign, we need not go farther to examine them; for *by theſe fruits we may know them.* There are three things which mainly uphold Civil Societies, *Truth*, *Obedience*, and *a care of the good of others*; but if men fall not through any ſudden infirmity or ſurprize, but openly and avowedly juſtifie the lawfulneſs of *falſhood*, *treaſon* and *cruelty*, when they are intended for the carrying on their deſign; what could they invent more contrary to the Laws both of God and man? wherein could they better diſcover themſelves, notwithſtanding *their Sheeps clothing*, to be meer *ravening Wolves*? 1. *Falſhood*, and that both in their *words* and *dealings*. 1. *In their words*, by aſſerting the lawfulneſs of *æquivocation* and *mental reſervation* in their moſt ſolemn Anſwers: as *Father Garnett*,

Proceed. againſt the Trait.

Garnett, when the *Lords* asked him, *Whether he had any conference with* Hall? *denyed it upon his Soul, and reiterated it with ſuch horrible execrations as wounded their hearts that heard him, and immediately upon* Hall's *confeſsing it, he excuſed himſelf by the benefit of æquivocation*: which being objected againſt *Garnett* after his Execution, the *Roman* Jeſuite *Eudæmon Johannes* defends him in it, and ſaith *it is lawful for a man to ſwear, and take the Sacrament upon it*, when he knows in his conſcience, what he ſaith to be abſolutely falſe, if he doth not help himſelf by a mental reſervation. And *Treſham* a little before his death in the *Tower* ſubſcribed it with his own hand, *That he had not ſeen* Garnett *in ſixteen years before, when it was evidently proved, and* Garnett *confeſſed they had been together but the Summer before*; and all that *Garnett* had to ſay for him was, *that he ſuppoſed he meant to æquivocate*. Lord! that men going into another world, ſhould think thus groſly to impoſe upon God and men. What was ſpeech intended for, if not that others might underſtand our meaning by it? Did ever any man tell a lye to himſelf? Truth in words conſiſts in an entire propoſition, and not of one half-ſpoken and half-concealed? and if it be lawful thus to abuſe mankind, it was to no purpoſe ever to forbid lying; for any but meer fools may help themſelves in their moſt ſolemn proteſtations, by ſome ſecret reſerve in their own minds:

Eudæm. Joh. Reſp. ad Ep. Iſ. Caſaub. c. 8. p. 171.

Proceed. againſt the Trait.

and

and so this principle makes way for all the lyes or perjuries in the world, if a man thinks that he is not bound to betray himself, or if he judges his own damage will be greater by discovering the truth, than the others damage will be by concealing it. 2. Falshood in *dealings*: and that notwithstanding the most solemn Promises, nay, the *Safe-conducts* of *Princes*. For notwithstanding all their shifts and evasions in this matter, no man that regards his safety, will ever put his life into their hands for the sake of the Council of *Constance*. All that they have to say is, that *The Emperour did as much as lay in him to do; but it belonged to the Council to proceed upon Hereticks, and the Emperour could not hinder that.* And what is this, but plainly to say, that Princes are to keep *their* words with *Infidels* and *Catholicks*, but they have nothing to do to keep their words with *Hereticks*? And if this be their principle, we must have a care how far we trust them.

2. *Treason.* It is the honour of our *Church* of *England*, that it asserts the *Rights* of *Princes* so clearly and fully, without tricks and reservations; and all that mean honestly, love to speak plainly. But how many cases have they in the *Church* of *Rome*, wherein men are acquitted from their duty from their Princes? If a Toy comes into the Popes head, or upon some Pique or *jealousie*, he falls to the censures of the Church, & excommunicates a

Prince: what a case is this poor Prince in as to all those Subjects that think themselves bound to obey the Pope? They may lawfully in their own opinion rise against him, fight with him, assassinate and murder him. And which is very observable, all this while they are not bound to believe the Pope infallible in these censures; so that right or wrong, if a Prince chance to fall under the Popes censures, we see what a liberty is left to all his creatures to ruine and destroy their Soveraign? The frequent attempts upon Q. *Elizabeth*, the murder of *Henry* the Third of *France* after their excommunications by *Pius* the Fifth, and *Sixtus* the Fifth, are sufficient evidences of the danger of Princes in these cases. By which last instance, we see it is not only the *case* of *Heresie*, which renders them obnoxious to the *Popes* censures; but particular piques and quarrells; or if the *Pope* chance to think a man *unfit to govern*, as in the case of *Chilperic* of *France*; or if they detain *Church-land*, belonging to *Monasteries*, in which case *Becanus* saith expresly, Kings and Princes are to be excommunicated and deprived: and Pope *Paul* the Fourth was perfectly of his opinion; and declared, *They were in a state of damnation that held them*. But so far some of them, are kind to Princes to say, *That they ought not to be deposed, till they are excommunicated*; and yet *Gregory* the seventh before excommunication deprived the Emperour *Henry* the

Becan. cont. Angl. p. 127.

History of the Council of *Trent*, *l.* 5. *n.* 392.

the Fourth for the damnable Hereſie, of defending his own Rights. But ſince they are lyable to theſe horrible cenſures upon ſo many cauſes, we may ſee how very tickliſh and uncertain the doctrine of *Obedience* muſt be among them, and that mens being guilty of *Treaſon* depends upon the Popes pleaſure. And methinks, herein the caſe of Princes deſerves hugely to be pittyed, that when no man thinks it lawful to cut another mans throat, or put him out of his houſe and eſtate, becauſe he is excommunicated; yet if a Prince falls under excommunication, he loſes preſently his right to the Crown, and his Subjects may take away Crown, liberty, and life from him.

3. *Cruelty*. And by this they fully diſcover themſelves to be *ravening wolves*: when they have loſt all the tenderneſs, and love, and good nature of men or Chriſtians: when no deſign can be ſo horrible or bloody, ſo miſchievous and treacherous, ſo baſe and cruel, but perſons will be found to undertake it, and that under a pretence of *Conſcience* and *Religion*. I need not here tell the long & dreadful ſtories of the *Roman Inquiſition*, the numbers of thoſe in other Countreys who have been *butchered* on the account of *Religion*, but the *Fact*, I mean *the Conſpiracy*, (for God be thanked it went not farther) which we bleſs God for the diſcovery and defeating of this day, doth abundantly manifeſt the *fruits* of thoſe doctrines, which they had

ſucked in from the *Roman* Church. If only a few deſperate perſons upon perſonal provocations had been engaged in ſo villainous a deſign, we ſhould have had never the leſs reaſon to thank God for our deliverance; but ſince it doth appear, that thoſe perſons who undertook it, pretended nothing in it but *conſcience and Religion*, we have not only reaſon to abhorr the undertaking, but the principles which animated them to it.

I know very well what *Sheeps clothing* hath been of late caſt over the moſt barbarous cruelty of theſe *ravening wolves*; and men by their impudence would endeavour to bear us down, *that it was only a project of ſome few male-contents, drawn in by the ſubtilty of a crafty Stateſman in thoſe dayes; and that it ought not in juſtice or honour to be imputed to the principles of their Religion.* Therefore to lay open before you the juſt and true circumſtances of this horrible Conſpiracy, I ſhall proceed upon theſe three particulars.

Apology for *Papiſts.* *Reply* to the *Anſwer*, p. 203. *Advocate* for *Liberty* of *Conſcience*, p. 218.

1. That the perſons engaged in it had no perſonal provocations to move them to it.

2. That all the motives they had to it were from the principles of their Religion.

3. That the Church of *Rome* hath never ſince deteſted the principles upon which they acted; or ſet any mark of infamy on the Actors in it.

1. That the perſons engaged in it had no perſonal provocations. What injury had *Catesby*,

or

or *Percy*, or *Treſham*, or *Digby* received from the *King* or *Parliament*, to ſtir them up above thouſands of others to be the great managers of ſo helliſh a Plot? Did not they enjoy their eſtates and places, and one of them at *Court* too? Why ſhould theſe men venture lives, eſtates, honours, families, and all that was dear to them? Were their eſtates confiſcated before; and themſelves every hour in danger of having their throats cut? This might make men of high ſpirits grow deſperate. But not the leaſt tittle of all this was pretended, by the moſt enraged of them: nothing but *Zeal for Religion and the Catholick Cauſe*, was ever pleaded by them. To which purpoſe theſe are remarkable words of *King James* in his *Speech* in *Parliament* upon the diſcovery. *For if theſe Conſpirators*, ſaith he, *had only been bankrupt perſons, or diſcontented upon occaſion of any diſgraces done them, this might have ſeemed to have been but a work of revenge. But for my own part, as I ſcarcely ever knew any of them, ſo cannot they alledge ſo much as a pretended cauſe of grief, and the wretch himſelf in hands doth confeſs, that there was no cauſe moving him or them, but Meerly and Only Religion.* And the *King* himſelf again avowed it to the whole Chriſtian world, *That the Papiſts had not before this horrible deſign, the leaſt colour of any diſcontent from him: that he had ſo far ſuſpended penalties, and abated the rigorous execution of Laws againſt them, to ſuch a degree, as gave great ſuſpicion to his beſt Subjects, who told him what would.*

K. *James's* Works, p. 501.

K. *James's* Works, p. 253.

would be the fruit of all his kindneſs to them. Nay, he ſaith, *they grew to that height of pride in confidence of his Mildneſs, as they did directly expect, and aſſuredly promiſe to themſelves Liberty of Conſcience, and equality with his other Subjects in all things: that he had ſhewn particular Favours to many of them, gave them free acceſs to him, eaſed them of their payments, ſet their Prieſts at liberty, granted a general Pardon to them after conviction.* Now after all this, what colour or pretence in the world can there be to ſay, that only diſcontent and deſpair brought theſe men to it? *O, but it might however be the cunning of a great Miniſter of State, to draw a few Gentlemen and others into ſuch a Plot.* This I know is ſuggeſted and believed by ſome, who think it a fine thing to talk out of the common road, and to be thought more skilful in Myſteries of State than other men. But I would fain underſtand from whence they derive this profound intelligence at ſuch a diſtance of years. If King *James* may be believed, if the Popiſh Hiſtorians and Apologiſts at that time may be credited, there was not the leaſt intimation given, either by the *Actors* or *Sufferers*, from abroad or at home of any ſuch thing. Was not the world ſufficiently alarm'd at the news of this dangerous and unparallel'd Conſpiracy? Were not men very inquiſitive into all the particulars? and thoſe of the *Church of Rome*, eſpecially the *Jeſuits* concerned in point of honour to wipe off the ſtain from themſelves,

ſelves, and to caſt the *odium* of it on a great *Miniſter of State*? Were not two of the *Jeſuits* who were conſcious of the Plot, preferred afterwards at *Rome*? and how many Writings came from thence about it? and yet not one man diſcovered the leaſt ſuſpicion of any ſuch thing. If they go on in this way without the leaſt ſhadow of proof to lay the contrivance of this Plot on a *profeſſed Proteſtant*: for all that I know, by the next age, they may hope to perſwade men, that it was a Plot of *Proteſtants* to blow up a *Popiſh King* and *Parliament*.

2. That they had all their Motives and encouragements from the principles of their Religion to undertake ſuch a deſign. (And *Philoſtratus* contends, that the murder of *Domitian* ought rather to be attributed to the doctrines of *Apollonius*, than to the hands of *Stephanus* and *Parthenius*.) For which we are to conſider, that they were fully poſſeſſed with this as a principle of their Religion, *That it was abſolutely in the Popes power to deprive heretical Princes of their dominions*: which had been rooted in them, eſpecially after that *Pius* the Fifth had fully declared it in his *Bull* againſt *Queen Elizabeth*. In her caſe they made no ſcruple to deſtroy her if they could, and thought they ſhould do it with a good conſcience. And there are no Villains in the world like thoſe who are Villains out of conſcience. But as to the *Queens* Succeſſor, the Pope had declared nothing; till ſuch time as *Garnett* being

L. 7. Vit. Apol.

Widdringt. append. ad Supplicat. p. 133.

being *Provincial* of the *Jesuits*, had received two *Brievs* from *Rome*, wherein he declared, *That in case they should suspect the Queens Successor would not be true to their Religion, it was lawful for them to use their endeavours to keep him from the Crown.* These *Brievs* *Garnett* shews to *Catesby*, who took the rise of his design from hence. And when afterwards in conference *Garnett* desired him to know the *Popes* opinion in it, he replyed, *That he needed not ask that, for if it were lawful to exclude him before he came to the Crown, it was lawful to take him away when he was in possession of it.* Which argument was so strong, that *Garnett* either had no mind, or was not able to answer it. All the scruple *Catesby* had after this was, *whether it were lawful to destroy the innocent and guilty together*: which *Garnett* fully resolved him in, so it were for the greater good of the *Church*. Upon these two grounds as *Widdrington*, a *Roman Catholick* well observes, *Catesby* laid the Foundation of his whole conspiracy. After this, it's evident by manifest proofs, and *Garnetts* own confession under his hand, that he and other *Jesuits* did understand the particulars of the Plot; and *Tesmond* another *Jesuit* and he discoursed the circumstances walking together in *Moor-Fields*; and that *not in confession*, as is pretended, for the *Jesuit* did not confess it as a fault, but advised with him about particulars, and asked him, *who should be Protector of the Kingdom after the Plot took effect?* as *Garnett* himself confessed.

Proceeding against the *Traitors. Garnett's* Tryal.

But

But ſuppoſe it had been *in confeſſion*; why might not *Treaſon* be diſcovered as well as *Hereſie*? and their *Caſuiſts* acknowledge, that *Hereſie* may be revealed. There is only this difference, that *Treaſon* is only againſt *Secular Princes*, but *Hereſie* againſt the intereſt of *their Church*; which is dearer to them than all the Princes lives in the World. Yea, ſo buſie were the *Jeſuits* in encouraging this Plot, that they not only debated it among themſelves; but one of them gave them the Sacrament upon the *Oath of Secrecy*, and then abſolved them after the diſcovery; another prayed for good ſucceſs, another comforted them after it was diſcovered by the examples of good deſigns that had wanted ſucceſs. And muſt we after all this believe, that only *a few diſcontented Laicks* were engaged in it, and that it was nothing at all to their Church? when the *Jeſuits* gave all the encouragement to them in it, in point of conſcience: ſo that it was truly, as well as wittily ſaid of one, That the *Jeſuits double garment* might well be called *Charity, becauſe it covered a multitude of ſins.*

3. But if the *Church* of *Rome* give no encouragement to ſuch actions; why hath it not deteſted the principles upon which it was grounded? Why hath it not removed all ſuſpicion in the minds of *Princes* and *People* of giving any countenance to ſuch treaſonable deſigns? But on the contrary, the ſame doctrines are ſtill avowed, and the per-

sons of the Conspirators honoured. *Widdrington* saith, *that* Garnetts *name was inserted into the English Martyrology*, though he gave it under his hand, that he dyed for Treason, *That his bones were kept for Reliques, and his Image set over Altars, as of a holy Martyr*? Is this the honour of *Regicides* and *Traytors* in the *Roman* Church? When in the late prosperous Rebellion, the prevailing Faction had proceeded to such a height of Wickedness, as to take away the life of our Gracious Soveraign, how did the *Church* and *Nation* groan and grow impatient till they could vindicate the honour of our Religion and Countrey! not only by an execution of Justice on the persons of the *Regicides*, but by declaring in *Parliament* against the principles that led to it. What hath there been done like this in the *Court* or *Church* of *Rome*, against the principles or actors of this *Gunpowder-Treason*? If it had succeeded, by all that we can see, *Paul* the Fifth might have admired *the providence of God in it*, as much as *Sixtus* the Fifth did in the murder of *Henry* the Third of *France*: and we may guess his mind shrewdly by the *Bulls* he published against the *Oath of Allegiance*, which the *King* was forced for his own security to impose on the *Papists* after this Conspiracy. With what scorn and contempt doth *Bellarmine* treat the *King* in his Writings against him, and tells him in plain terms, *if he would be secure, he must give liberty to their Religion*? It seems

Widdrington. Appen. p. 150.

ſeems then, their principles are dangerous to Princes where they have it not. What mark of diſhonour was there ſet by their own party on any one of the Conſpirators? Two of the *Jeſuits* upon their arrival at *Rome*, met with ſuch hard uſage, that one was made the *Popes Pœnitentiary*, the other a *Confeſſor* in S. *Peters* at *Rome*. And is not this the way to let the world ſee, how deteſtable ſuch perſons and practices are to their Church? To conclude all, I challenge thoſe of the *Roman* Church to produce any one ſolemn Declaration of that Church, (I do not ſay of Secular Powers or ſome particular perſons, or Councils rejected at *Rome*) whereby they make it unlawful for the Pope to depoſe Princes, or to abſolve Subjects from their Oaths of Allegiance to them. But inſtead of that, even in this preſent age of ours, that opinion which makes it unlawful, hath been condemned at *Rome* by three ſeveral Popes, *Paul* the Fifth, *Innocent* the Tenth, and *Alexander* the Seventh: and which is more conſiderable, all three have condemned it with a particular reſpect to the caſe of His Majeſties Subjects; and not meerly condemned it as a falſe opinion, but *as wicked and contrary to faith.* And *is not the world grown wiſer now*, as to theſe matters? But if they be not, I hope we may be. And after their frequent Treaſons and horrible Conſpiracies, and principles, never diſowned by their Church, have we

[illegible] reason to entertain suspicion of them, [illegible] their principles of Civil Government, [illegible] give sufficient security; that these [illegible] principles have no influence upon them?

But blessed be that God, that hath hitherto [illegible] ed the malicious purposes of the inveterate [illegible] of our Church and Religion: that hath brought to light these works of darkness; and yet continued us in the enjoyment of the benefits of this mighty deliverance to this day. May the same Gracious God go on still to protect our established Religion, against all Forreign Usurpations and Domestick Factions. May our love to it still increase, and our zeal for its preservation make us study the best means to preserve it; that neither Divisions among our selves, nor Assaults of our common enemies may be ever able to ruine and destroy it; that we may still say with the Psalmist,

Psal. 124. 6, 7, 8. *Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us over as a prey unto their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a Bird out of the snare of the fowlers; the snare is broken and we are escaped. Our help is in the Name of the Lord who made Heaven and Earth.*

FINIS.

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